

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

Shears and Paste-Pot Editor.

Criticism upon the views advocated in these columns is solicited, and any responsible person will be given correspondence for this purpose, or for the purpose of discussing any subject connected with rural affairs. Constructive criticism is invited, and the editor's attention should reach this office on Saturday preceding publication.

Ice in Butter-Making.

"Ice in the dairy must go," says Prof. L. B. Arnold in an exchange, arguing that cream raised at sixty degrees gives better butter and of longer keeping qualities than where the refrigeration is carried down to but little above freezing point. He says experiments show that the best butter is not made where the most cooling is done. Messrs. Barrill and Whitman of Little Falls, N. Y., who operate fine creameries, say that the one in which the least cooling was done turned out the most butter, and the one in which the most the poorest; and that the butter in the others was graded between them according to the degree of cooling, though it was fairly good in all of them.

The reasons set forth by Prof. Arnold why less refrigeration in the handling of milk and cream may result in improved dairy products are as follows:—

Sudden and extreme changes in milk, cream, or butter injure keeping. The same is true with feed material. If two pieces of meat are taken from the same animal and one is kept in sixty degrees and the other on ice for three hours, the last piece will spoil long before the one that has been kept at sixty degrees. The earlier destruction of the chilled meat is due, not so much to the sudden or severe changes it undergoes, as to the infection it gets in its cold state. As soon as it is chilled much below the surrounding air it begins to become wet with dew. As the warm air by contact with the cold meat becomes cooled it condenses, and being unable to hold its condensed state, the moisture it could easily retain in its warmer and more stable state, the condensed moisture falls in dew on the meat, and the impurities and infecting germs which the air usually contains goes with it and lodge on the meat, which becomes thus loaded with infection. As soon as the meat is warmed up to a temperature at which the germs can grow they at once develop and cause decomposition. Milk, cream and butter chilled with ice load up with the impurities and infection from organic germs in the air the same as the meat on ice, and their durability and their quality are affected by the infection more than by the chilling.

While we fail to discern the very close analogy between the keeping of meat exposed to the air and the raising of cream in submerged cans, it is not impossible but that in certain directions the best results may not be derived from excessively low temperature in keeping milk and cream. The objection raised against the use of ice in the creamery are less valid.

Observing creamery men are becoming aware that ice in open and cold setting is the cause of a great deal of mischief to the butter, and only use it because of its great convenience. If in submerging milk injury from atmospheric conditions are pretty much avoided, the use of ice cuts off all maturity of the cream, at least all in the right direction, and finally leaves it in a somewhat deteriorated condition. Were it not for the speed in creaming, and the saving of labor it occasions, it would soon go out of use, so many are becoming satisfied that butter from ice-cooled milk and cream cannot compete with that made with such cooling.

In regard to ripening or "maturing" the cream, that is of subsequent consideration, after the cream gatherer has left the cream at the factory, and if the butter worker understands his business, the cream goes through the maturing or ripening process under the care of the creamer. That the cream thus drawn off from the submerged can and immediately placed in the gathering can can undergo very great deterioration if quickly handled, will be new to many dairy men, and, possibly, questioned by a few. Possibly there are, as we have intimated, certain conditions brought about by too rapid cooling of the milk or by its being subjected to an ice-cold temperature, which impairs the keeping qualities of the butter, as similar conditions in handling milk have been known to injure cheese in factories where ice was liberally used in hot weather.

That haymaker who goes right along with his work of haying as he does with his other farm work, without dodging on account of the prospective fickleness of the weather, without withdrawing from the field, because the early morning is not clear, will as a rule get his hay in as good condition, and certainly will get it faster and do it cheaper than one who is timid about it and does not "pitch in" for fear of getting his hay hurt. Up and after it, is the word, neither working too hard, nor making long days, but putting the work in systematically and regular.

Nothing is more susceptible to foreign matter than bad butter. If a farmer be not sure of this let him place a pound or so of butter near a place of ordinary soap, or a few onions, and exclude the air for a few days and he will be convinced.

A farmer who last year grew 300 bushels of mangle vetch, intends this year to grow 1000 bushels. He grew them for cows, but finds them excellent for sheep, horses and pigs as a change from dry or concentrated food. There is a considerable amount of sugar in mangles, and they possess the advantage over other beans of being in good condition for feeding till late in the winter.

THE HOUSEKEEPER.

Practical housekeepers throughout the country are requested to send in communications for this department.

WASHINGTON MADE EASY.—I do not suppose that my method will commend itself to all the good housewives of Maine, but I venture to think some of them will approve it, and in any case it is good to compare notes, as the readers of this column can testify. Let me say first, that I economize the washing as much as possible by the use of a two-key-rat table cloth for common, and neither I, nor my little girl indulge in white skirts or light dresses, except on special occasions. The two men and the boy, who constitute the other members of the family, also have colored shirts for common wear. Every two weeks a good woman, who is glad to have the work, comes in and does the washing, scrubbing and general cleaning up which takes her about seven hours; this is washing made easy; but let me add, I think I save the money I pay her in the increase of health, strength, and general happiness. And I never have a doctor's bill as my neighbors so often do. I was in to see a worthy neighbor of mine a few weeks ago, and she was complaining of the amount of hard work she had to do, especially of the washing. "I am sorry," I said "but I can't give you much sympathy." "No," I didn't expect you would; but I can't do as you do; we have a man to do with here!" I said, with considerable emphasis, "Well," I said "and don't he have a woman to deal with, I should like to know? If my husband wants a man to come and do a day's work he don't ask my permission—he sends off and gets him, and if I want Mrs. Mack to do a day's work, washing or cleaning, I send for her, and say nothing to him about it. I expect he thinks I have sense enough, and judgment enough, to know when I ought to do such things, and when I ought not, and I consider myself just as much entitled to the exercise of my own judgment as he is."

"My husband thinks a woman isn't good for anything if she doesn't work, and he never thinks she can do too much, she said. "Does he think that about his horse?" I asked. She looked like a walking dead person at that moment, yet I couldn't help thinking how much of it is John, and how much is Ann? For I knew she had a great deal more money to spend than I did, and when she wanted a new dress, or a new carpet, she had it, and was my private opinion that if she wanted to send for Mrs. Mack she could, as I knew she sometimes did. Let me put this little story in parenthesis, and go on to say that after experiments with a variety of washing powders and soaps, I have settled down to the constant use of ammonia—such as comes in big bottles for that purpose. A table-spoonful of the first soda and another in the boiler is sufficient. And I feel sure there is nothing like it for cleansing woolen clothes. If we were not I should use borax instead of soap for washing windows and paint. It has cleansing properties equal to soap, and does not leave streaks to be rubbed off. It may be dissolved in water and kept conveniently ready—the water will only dissolve a certain amount, the rest will settle to the bottom of the bottle; half a cupful in a small pail of water is sufficient. If I am not making too long a story of a small affair, I will say that I generally take three forenoons to do the ironing, besides the other household work, in "washing week," and then I have a week without either, that seems very restful and comfortable, as well as convenient for such other extras as visiting or dressmaking, or those thousand and one things that have no special time or place.—Mrs. T. in Maine Farmer.

THE HOME TABLE.—Cooking, in many families, is looked upon as a matter of small importance, and all ceremony of etiquette connected with it is dispensed with. Tablecloths and napkins, where there are any, are used until they are so soiled and disfigured as to be absolutely disgraceful; dishes are cracked and cracked, part of one set being to take the missing links of another. The casters are dull and rickety, and half the bottles are empty, and there is constant disorder at the tables as one and another jumps up to find some forgotten dish. Food eaten in such a manner may satisfy the appetite, but it is the very grossness of feeding. It is due to every man who provides the food for his family that it should be made the most of, cooked with care and attention to make it palatable and set out in the best possible guise. This is part of our daily religion. Many a man goes out of his home with a dispirited spirit, a sensation of weariness and disgust of life generally, and does not know that it is the element of home that is oppressing him. We have no lack of wives who are accomplished musicians, but a man cannot dine out on sonatas, however tender they are, and if he is not a domestic polygamist he is up to his ears in domesticity. The model house is that in which the home table is set every day at meal time on the stroke of the clock, with clean linen, shining silver, spotless set in tiny crystal dishes, a center glass of celery or lettuce or some green thing to make a salad of, and each dish perfect in itself. It may only be a potato pie, but who is there who does not enjoy a potato pie when nicely made? The richly browned covering of mashed potatoes, the bubbling, savory chopped meat beneath, with its fancy gravy? Such a dish with one onion and good bread and butter will wear every day for generations after they are worn out and gone. It is not necessary to use them roughly or

THE FACTORY GIRLS OF LONDON.

There is, however, below the shop girls, the dress-makers, the servants, and the working girls whom the world knows, a very large class of women who work does not know, and is not anxious to know. They are the factory girls of London; you can see them, if you wish, creeping out of the factories and places where they work on Saturday afternoon, and thus get a notion of what they must need to be extraordinarily happy. These girls, I am told, for the most part so ignorant and helpless that many of them do not know how to use a needle; they cannot read, or if they can, they never do; they carry the virtue of independence as far as they are able, and insist on living by themselves, two sharing a single room; nor will they brook the least interference with their freedom, even from those who try to help them. Who are their friends, what becomes of them in the end, why they go to what period of life they reach, and how they get through the lump, and live almost intolerable. The legs became enormously enlarged, and running shoes formed, during great quantities of extremely offensive matter. No treatment was of any avail until the man, by Mr. Leland's direction, was supplied with Ayer's Sarsaparilla, which cleared the skin and irritation, healed the sores, removed the swelling, and completely restored the limb to use. Mr. Leland has personally used

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